

HIJSON: a cartographic document format for web modeling of interactive indoor mapping

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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces HIJSON, a novel indoor cartographic document format. A software framework is also presented, that relies on HIJSON documents and is entirely based on web technologies. With respect to current cartographic formats, HIJSON brings four major enhancements: (a) exposes a hierarchical structure, (b) may import external geometric models; (c) uses local metric coordinate systems and (d) accepts semantic extensions. The HIJSON format is designed to describe any geometry of the *indoor space* of complex buildings, capturing their hierarchical structure, a complete representation of their topology, and all the objects (either smart or not) contained inside. The textual representation allows the software framework to offer a web environment in which the user is presented with either 2D or 3D models of the indoor ambient to navigate. Such virtually rebuilt environment, accessible via web browsers from any kind of device, can be regarded as the platform where several applications may coexist: IoT monitoring; realtime multi-person tracking; crossfloor user navigation, through an algorithm that automatically finds valid walkable routes, taking into account both architectural obstacles and furniture. The semantic extensions supported by the HIJSON framework architecture encapsulate the details about communication protocols, rendering style, and exchanged and displayed information, allowing the HIJSON format to be extended with any sort of models of objects, sensors or behaviors.

Categories and Subject Descriptors

H.4 [Information Systems Applications]: Miscellaneous;
D.2.8 [Software Engineering]: Metrics—*complexity measures, performance measures*

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General Terms

Algorithms, Design, Documentation, Standardization

Keywords

Document format, indoor cartography, indoor navigation, IoT monitoring, HIJSON, multiperson tracking, web application

1. INTRODUCTION

An indoor environment interactive mapping consists of a virtual reconstruction of a real indoor space in which the user can move around and then interact with the objects which are found the same position they actually occupy in the real world. So an indoor interactive mapping, can be thought of a specialized and very evolved user interface capable of giving a glimpse of a section of the real world that the user can handle in a natural and intuitive way.

Such a reconstructed virtual indoor environment is very interesting as it can be considered a general platform where many different applications can rely upon.

Both promising and already well explored researching fields find in virtual indoor mapping the perfect context to be integrated into.

In particular, for ambineces which massive presence of sensor-equipped (or “smart”) objects, which realize the so-called IoT, the indoor interactive mapping represents an ideal integrated interface for IoT monitoring system.

It can be the container of indoor navigation systems, giving to the user that need to be routed across an indoor environment the possibility to interact with objects along the suggested paths.

Futhermore, in conjunction with the advancements in the fields of user indoor location, it represents the most natural interface to perform realtime access monitoring and multi-person tracking.

To enable such a interactive mapping platform, it is indispensable a descriptive representation of the indoor environment. This means entering in the field of indoor cartography, which as digital evolution of plain floor plans, is arrived to arouse the interest of big players like Google that has integrated into Google Maps indoor plans of specific locations of interest [9]. In general, can be considered “of interest”

(such to justify and motivate indoor cartographic applications) public or commercial places of vast dimensions, as for example airports, train stations, shopping mall, or alternatively private buildings subject to strict access control, like warehouse, logistics centers, datacenter.

Despite of the growing attention around indoor cartography, efforts to bring out definitions of open formats for indoor representation are few and partial, certainly not intended to support interactive indoor mapping which is instead the main purpose this paper.

The work, jointly developed by **SoGeI** (Società Generale d'Informatica), a company fully owned by Italian Ministry of Economy and Finance, and the **CVDLAB** (Computational Visual Design Laboratory) of the Computer Science and Automation Department of "Roma Tre" University, is inspired by the necessities of SoGeI itself, which runs one of the largest data center of Italy, then requiring strict access control policies which have to be composed with indispensable human/machine coordinate maintenance scenarios. Support for these scenarios, where real time awareness of the maintainer position inside the data center helps to both reduce intervention and increase safety, has been adopted as the first use case of the interactive indoor mapping based on the indoor cartographical format proposed.

The remainder of this document is organized as follows. In Section II is provided an overview of the state of the art in the field of indoor document standard and related applications. Section III is devoted to describe the advances introduced by the novel cartographic document proposed, while section IV presents the document syntax. Section V reports about the toolkit specifically developed to handle the new document format. In Section VI is depicted the overall architecture and the implementation of the web based application framework, which is in turn used to achieve the objectives stated above. Finally, Section VII proposes some conclusive remarks and future developments.

2. RELATED WORK

Researches about the cartographic representation of indoor environments are numerous and at the same time heterogeneous regarding to the strategies applied. Different sources of information are used and accuracy of the produced solution depends on the adopted approach. In some cases the information is obtained with automatic or semi-automatic processing of files that describe the architectural structure of a building, such as BIM (Link a BIM) and/or IFC (Link a IFC) [4]. Image processing is also used to extract topological information from floor plan images [8]. In other works, building informations and descriptive parameters are redefined from scratch [10]. This choice is driven by the unsuitability of the current representative formats: images contain poor information and CAD files are not designed for this kind of use. A recurring topic among the use of cartographic information is indoor navigation [8, 10, 4]. The proposed approaches are very different in this case too, and based on several strategies with some basic elements in common. An often adopted solution is based on the representation of the routing information as a graph, having a node for each room and an edge for each couple of connected rooms. In some cases the edges are weighted in function of euclidean distance. The detail level of the graph and hence the effective practicality of the calculated paths, can vary depending on the technique and the design choices applied, but in gen-

eral most of the proposed solutions retrieve information only from architectural structure. A topic related to the navigation is the location of users. All the considered works agree on the inadequacy of GNSS in indoors contexts, due to the significant reduction in signal quality. To locate the exact position of a user inside a building, the currently most used techniques are based on fingerprinting and triangulation of radio signals (WiFi, Bluetooth, etc.) flanked by more original solutions based on, for example, image recognition [1]. User tracking issue is faced with solutions that range from the clever utilization of inertial tracking sensors embedded in many smartphones [1] to the adoption of ad hoc devices [8].

The actual "de-facto" standard in terms of geospatial data representation is the GeoJSON format, which can be easily used for any type of geographical annotation. In some cases it has been slightly adapted to be used in indoor environments (IndoorJSON).

2.1 The GeoJSON format

GeoJSON is a geospatial data interchange format based on JSON, suitable for a geometrical encoding of various geographic data structures. As opposed to GIS format, GeoJSON is an open standard. Positions need to be expressed in geographical coordinates (usually WGS84).

GeoJSON supports the following geometry primitives: **Point**, **LineString**, **Polygon**, **MultiPoint**, **MultiLineString**, and **MultiPolygon**. Lists of geometries are represented by a **GeometryCollection**. Geometries with additional properties are **Feature** objects. Lists of **Feature** are represented by a **FeatureCollection**.

A single **Feature** is composed essentially by two mandatory fields: **geometry**, which describes the objects' geometry accordingly to the previously defined primitives, and **properties** which contains additional information about the **Feature**.

It is possible to define complex shapes through the composition of simple GeoJSON objects. Mainly due to its simplicity, GeoJSON is widely used and deeply integrated in several applications and services.

2.2 The IndoorJSON format

IndoorJSON is a GeoJSON variant defined and used by *indoor.io*, a Finnish company devoted to indoor environment mapping. IndoorJSON is compliant with GeoJSON syntax, and it may consist of any number of **Features** and/or **FeatureCollections**. All **Features** are interpreted similarly regardless of their grouping into nested **FeatureCollections**. IndoorJSON supports all GeoJSON geometry types.

Some particular properties are used to correctly define indoor elements:

- **level**: described which level contains the feature;
- **geomType**: identifies the object's category, useful during the visualization process.

There are some additional not mandatories properties useful for the indoor representation:

- **accessible**: describes if an element is walkable or not;
- **connector**: defines if the element is a connection between two levels;
- **direction**: describes the direction of the connection (both ways, only up, only down);

A syntax validator is provided by *indoor.io*, but the commercial nature of this project limits the number of tools available to deal with this format.

3. ADVANCES ON CARTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENT FORMATS

The focus of this work is the definition of a novel format of cartographic documents along with the software ecosystem rooted on it. A simple but effective algorithm to find indoor valid routes is also provided. The **HIJSON** (Hierarchical Indoor JSON, this is the name chosen for the format) and the accompanying software framework aim to realize a mapping of indoor real spaces with a virtual interactive web environment. The HIJSON is based upon ideas and design principles collected from previous formats and identifies three critical improvements with respect to them: it exposes a *hierarchical structure*, uses *metric local coordinate system* and accepts *semantic extensions*. Furthermore, geometrical and topological data are conveniently imported and represented via LAR, an advanced representation scheme, allowing to deal with *hyperlinked geometric models*.

3.1 Hierarchical structure

The HIJSON format allows for hierarchical description of indoor spaces. The introduction of a hierarchical structure establishes a parent-child relation between entities of the model, reflecting a container-contained relationship. This directly implies a neater representation than the plain linear structure adopted by GeoJSON, being a perfect analogy of objects contained (i.e. placed) into spaces.

In addition, more organized arrangement is allowed by logical (or even physical) grouping: concepts like building wings, sections, stories, departments, etc. can be introduced to reflect into the document structure logical or physical real divisions, categories or relationships.

Hierarchical structures are common in computer graphics since they are used as scenegraphs. This accordance of underlying structures really simplify 3D render algorithms of HIJSON documented environments.

Furthermore the container-contained relation enables to use local reference system.

3.2 Hyperlinked geometric models

A HIJSON document may further import external geometric models—either of the buildings itself or the interior furniture or devices—that are topologically complete (in the sense of solid modeling [12]) and very compact. Such models coming from a source outside the document are acquired by linking JSON files that contain a Linear Algebraic Representation (LAR) of topology and geometry, to be expanded for visualization or interaction at any useful level of detail.

The LAR scheme [7] is characterised by a very large domain, including architecture, building and construction [11], 2D and 3D engineering meshes, non-manifold geometric and solid models and meshes, and high-resolution 3D images [6]. This scheme uses the set of *Combinatorial Cellular Complexes* (CCC) as mathematical domain [2], and various compressed representations of *sparse matrices* [5] as codomain.

Since LAR provides a complete representation of the topology of the represented space, the matrix $[\partial_d]$ of the boundary operator shall be used to compute the coordinate representation $[c]$ of the *boundary* chain of *any subset c* of cells, though

a *single* operation of SpMV multiplication [5] between the CSR (Compressed Sparse Row) representation of $[\partial]$ and the CSC (Compressed Sparse Column) representation of the $[c]$ chain, resulting in very efficient computations on modern hardware, even mobile.

```
V = [[6., 0.], [7., 1.], [9., 0.], [13., 2.], [15., 4.], [17., 8.], [14., 9.], [13., 10.], [11., 11.], [9., 10.], [6., 9.], [7., 9.], [3., 8.], [0., 6.], [2., 3.], [2., 1.], [8., 2.], [10., 2.], [13., 4.], [14., 6.], [13., 7.], [12., 10.], [11., 9.], [9., 7.], [7., 7.], [4., 7.], [2., 6.], [5., 5.], [4., 2.], [6., 3.], [11., 4.], [12., 6.], [12., 7.], [10., 5.], [8., 6.], [7., 6.], [5., 5.]]
```

```
FV = [[0., 1., 16., 28., 29.], [0., 15., 28.], [1., 2., 17.], [1., 16., 17., 33.], [2., 3., 17.], [3., 4., 18., 19.], [3., 17., 18., 30.], [4., 5., 19.], [5., 6., 19.], [6., 7., 20., 21., 22., 32.], [6., 19., 20.], [7., 8., 21.], [8., 9., 21., 22.], [9., 11., 23., 24.], [9., 22., 23.], [10., 11., 24., 25.], [10., 12., 25.], [12., 13., 25.], [26.], [13., 14., 27.], [13., 26., 27.], [14., 15., 28.], [14., 27., 28., 29., 36.], [16., 29., 34.], [16., 33., 34.], [17., 30., 33.], [18., 19., 31.], [18., 30.], [31.], [19., 20., 31., 32.], [22., 23., 32., 33.], [23., 24., 34., 35.], [23., 33., 34.], [24., 25., 27., 36.], [24., 35., 36.], [25., 26., 27.], [29., 34., 35.], [29., 35., 36.], [30., 31., 32., 33.]]
```

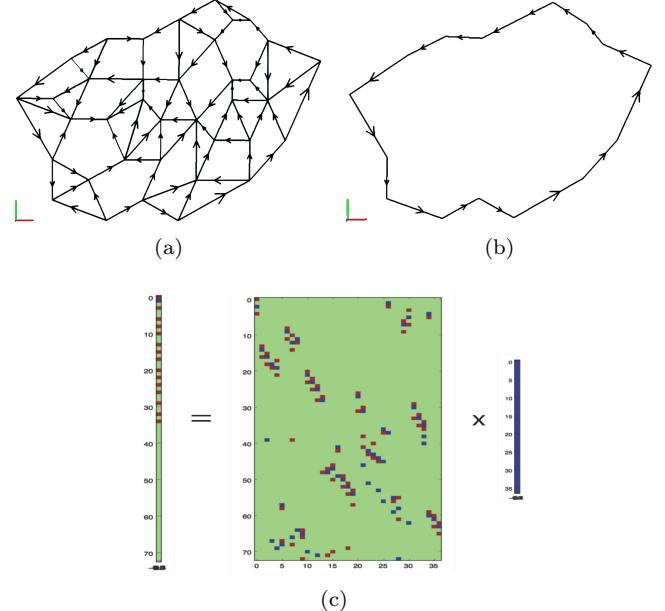


Figure 1: A toy example of the LAR scheme: (a) the bare minimum of data with *complete* information about topology; (b) the extracted boundary; (c) the extraction method $[e] = [\partial][f]$ giving the coordinate representation (in the discrete basis of the 1-cells) of the boundary edges $[e]$ by product of the sparse boundary operator matrix $[\partial]$ times the coordinate representation $[f]$ of the 2-cells (faces), in the discrete basis of the 2-cells.

The expansion of a LAR model, to be considered as a general-purpose graphic primitive, may be executed on either the server or the supervisor client of the HIJSON Web Toolkit architecture (see Section 6.2.1), or even on the explorer client, depending on the size and the locality of the model to be expanded.

3.3 Metric local coordinate system

Supported by the hierarchical underlying structure, the HIJSON document format allows for the use of local coordinate system. This means that the shape of all elements can be convenient modelled in local coordinate and then placed in the right position with respect to the position of the parent (or container) element applying a translation and a rotation vector.

Another substantial advantage is represented by the adoption of a metric reference, consequently simplifying the compilation of the document, however it is, manual or aided by software tools.

The HIJSON document format is specially designed to guarantee the user to be routed seamlessly from outdoor to

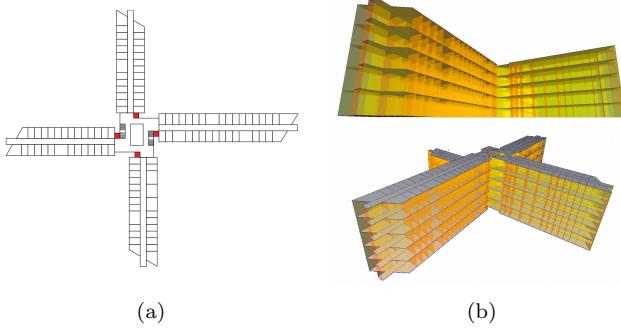


Figure 2: Office building: (a) the schematic plan; (b) the simplified 3D model generated for testing on the field the in-door mapping project described in this paper.

indoor and vice versa. Even though indoor geometries are inputted in a metric local continuous outdoor-indoor navigation is ensured via the definition of a processing pipeline detailed in the following.

3.4 Semantic extensions

Semantic extensions make the HIJJSON format extendible and customizable, that is, able to adequately respond to any object representation need. To define a semantic extension means to allow the HIJJSON document to model an object previously not covered, or even to modify the behaviour of a comprised one. Semantic extensions are to be defined both as HIJJSON format syntax and as HIJJSON Tool source code. In particular it is necessary to define respectively a new HIJJSON Element and a new HIJJSON Class, as specified below.

4. HIJJSON SYNTAX

In Figure 3 it is shown a simplified example of an input file ready to be processed by the HIJJSON pipeline.

```
{
  "config": {
    ...
  },
  "data": [
    ...
    {
      "id": "architecture",
      "type": "FeatureCollection",
      "features": [...]
    },
    {
      "id": "furniture_1",
      "type": "FeatureCollection",
      "features": [...]
    },
    ...
  ]
}
```

Figure 3: Example of HIJJSON file.

The HIJJSON document is composed of different parts:

- configuration: a JSON object containing parameters and settings useful for the building representation. In particular three points of the local reference system are mapped to three couples of geographical coordinates. This information allows the computation of the transformation matrix used to translate the local coordinates to global ones.
- one or more data collections: each of these lists is given in the form of a GeoJSON FeatureCollection, containing a number of HIJJSON Elements. Since HIJJSON Elements adhere to the GeoJSON format, each collection can be accepted by a GeoJSON validator. HIJJSON introduces some additional rules that allow the adoption of this format for indoor representation. In the next paragraph is given a sample of HIJJSON Element, with the description of the main differences from a standard GeoJSON Feature.

```
{
  "id": "architecture",
  "type": "FeatureCollection",
  "features": [
    ...
    {
      "type": "Feature",
      "id": "room_0.1",
      "geometry": {
        "type": "Polygon",
        "coordinates": [
          [ [ 0, 0 ], [ 11, 0 ], [ 11, 19 ], [ 0, 19 ] ]
        ],
        ...
      },
      "properties": {
        "class": "room",
        "parent": "level_0",
        "description": "Office of Mr. Smith",
        "tVector": [ 10, 20, 0 ],
        "rVector": [ 0, 0, 90 ]
      },
      ...
    }
  ]
}
```

Figure 4: Example of data collection, with the definition of an HIJJSON Element.

4.1 HIJJSON Element description

The first additional requisite above the GeoJSON format rules is the necessity of a unique ID, necessary for the referencing by possible child elements. The Geometry types allowed are Point, LineString and Polygon. Each geometry type is used to represent particular categories of elements (e.g. Polygons for levels and rooms, LineString for walls and doors, Point for furniture, etc.). The geometry coordinates are expressed in meters, and for convention starting at the bottom-left of the element. Unlike GeoJSON, where

all the properties are optional, in HIJSON some attributes are mandatories:

- **class**: represent the element category, used to instantiate the appropriate semantic class;
- **parent**: contains parent's id of the nodes. The reason of the unique id depends on this property. The HIJSON Tree is created on the base of parent property;
- **tVector** and **rVector**: represent the translation and rotation relative to the parent element. The measure unit for translation is meter and for rotation is grades.

The definition of other properties is mandatory depending on the class of the element: For example the classes that defines internal or external walls require a **connections** array, containing the IDs of the adjacent areas. This information is used by the connector children of the element, like doors, to identify the areas linked together. These connector elements are identified by a boolean **connector** property.

Optional fields can be added to improve the precision of the representation. Given the nature of the GeoJSON format from which HIJSON derives, the elements are represented by their 2D shape, like on a planimetry. To assign a value to the height of the object, intended as third dimension, the property **height** can be used.

A **description** property can provide further information about the element.

Additional optional fields can be added without restrictions, in order to enrich and extend the expressivity of the representation. An example of data collection is given in Figure 4.

5. HIJSON TOOLKIT

The HIJSON Toolkit is a software module that implements common operations and transformations on HIJSON documents. Written in *JavaScript* language, it has been built to be deployed in the web environment. It is *modular* and entirely *isomorphic*, i.e. can run on the server as well as on every client. Working in the web environment, the Toolkit benefits of the fertility as regards the software development in this field: it takes advantage of libraries and frameworks such as *Ract*, “the JavaScript library for building user interfaces” by Facebook, and *Three.js* a framework to deal with *WebGL* technologies.

The Toolkit realizes the instantiation and extension logic of a HIJSON document, as described in the “HIJSON Class definition” section, and realize a multistage transformation pipeline that, as required, can be used entirely or only in part.

5.1 Processing pipeline

The HIJSON processing pipeline relies the sequence of preliminary transformations that have to be applied to a HIJSON document before any futher operation. It is not strictly required to complete each stage of the pipeline: exit stage depends on the specific use case.

The application of the transformation pipeline has a double aim. The first one consists in generating the graph of valid paths between all the interesting HIJSON elements. The second aim is the generation of one *GeoJSON* document for each story of the building described by the HIJSON document. In this way a bidimensional plant for each level of the building can be provided and visualized through any compliant *GeoJSON* viewer.

HIJSON processing pipeline (as pictured in figure AGGIUNGERE RIFERIMENTO) is composed by 6 elaboration stages. In the following are detailed operations executed by each stage, which are, in the order: *validation*, *georeferencing*, *parsing*, *graph paths generation*, *2D layers generation*, *marshalling*.

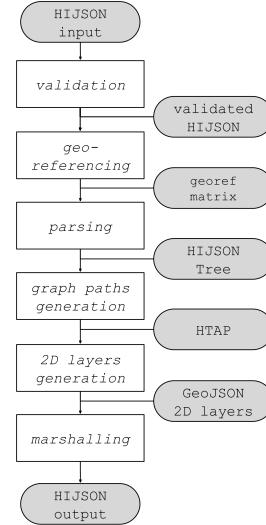


Figure 5: “HIJSON processing pipeline”

1. **validation** - The first one is the validation stage. In order to begin with the effective transformations the input HIJSON document must be compliant with the rules defined in (AGGIUNGERE REF TO PARAGRAFO REGOLE DI VALIDITA'). In the case the validation stage fails, processing aborts and do not continue to following stages. If the stage success, the output for the next stage is a validated HIJSON.
2. **georeferencing** - In the second stage, in order to allow for continuous outdoor/indoor navigation, the system needs to compute the georeferencing matrix, a linear operator able to transform local coordinates into global coordinates (referred to world coordinate system as latitude and longitude misures) and viceversa. This task is accomplished by solving a linear system obtained from information contained in HIJSON configuration part and precisely from the correnspondance of three real word points to three points included into the HIJSON document.
3. **parsing** - The parsing stage, takes the validated and georeferenced HIJSON as its input, that as illustrated before can be thought of as a list of HIJSON Elments, parses them and produce an istance of HIJSON Tree. The HIJSON Tree is an object in memory representing the tree hierarchical structure of the building described by the HIJSON document.
4. **graph paths generation** - The fourth stage is in charge of the generation of the graph paths. This aim is accomplished according to the algorithm described in (AGGIUNGERE RIFERIMENTO A ##### Automatic generation of valid paths). The graph paths will be useful afterwards to compute valid paths from couple of point of interest on the graph. Once the graph

- paths has been computed, the input HIJSON Tree is augmented with paths information, becoming what has been called an HTAP (HIJSON Tree Augmented with Paths). Augmentation always takes place as leaf nodes added as children of a specific (e.g. “room”) level.
5. **2D layers generation** - The fifth stage is the generation of GeoJSON layer. For each level, the system generates one geoJSON layer that will be used for the creation of 2D map. Each layer contains the children of ‘level’ node in the HIJSON Tree. Every class contains a boolean value that is used to choose which class will be a part of geoJSON layer. Every element has a geographical coordinates calculated by the transformation matrix with regard to the local coordinates of the HIJSON element.

6. **marshalling** - The last stage is responsible of execute a serialization of the the transformed data. Tasks like breaking dependency-loops and stringification are performed. This stage is useful mainly serverside, as and the output is stored ready to be served to any requiring client.

5.1.1 Algorithms: automatic generation of valid paths

The fourth stage of the processing pipeline is responsible for the generation of a graph of valid paths through the entire model represented by the input HIJSON document. The graph generated according to the algorithm described in the following, although not optimal, ensures a complete coverage of the surface while limiting the number of generated nodes. Resulting graph is weighted on the edges with nodes distances and each node represents alternatively:

- a. standard path node, i.e. a junction node or possibly an endpoint of a path;
- b. connection node, used as subproblem composing element in the divide et impera approach adopted (as described below).
- c. element nodes ie. HIJSON Element (whose HIJSON Class explicitly grants his presence in the graph), typically an endpoint of a path;

Such a graph allows for directions calculations between any two given nodes. Although different approaches have been explored [3], a very classical solution has been selected in this case, so directions are actually computed clientside applying the Dijkstra’s shortest route algorithm on the graph.

Taking advantage of the hierarchical structure of the HIJSON document, and according to the divide et impera approach, the problem of the graph paths generation is splitted in several sub-problems which consist in the computation of the sub-graphs relative to each room, or more generally ambience. The sub-graphs are then linked together through the connection nodes (which in most cases represents doors). The resolution of each sub-problem (as depicted in figure METTERE RIFERIMENTO ALLA FIGURA), is composed by 4 phases:

1. Computation of the walkable area of the ambience: this task is accomplished subtracting area of the possibly encumbrances to the area of the ambience; the result is typically a surface with holes;

2. Triangulation of the walkable area: the computed surface is triangulated taking into account the presence of holes;
3. Identification of graph nodes: for each triangle side completely internal to the area, its midpoint is selected as standard path node;
4. Junction of nodes: nodes relative to the same triangle are then linked together; both element nodes and connection nodes (i.e. doors) are linked to the nearest node in the ambience (i.e. room).

5.2 HIJSON Class definition

To exploit the possibilities offered by HIJSON Toolkit, along with the HIJSON document, some custom dynamic behaviours must be described. These behaviours encapsulate the specificities relative to communication protocols with the sensors as well as user interaction peculiarities. The interface for these behaviours is the HIJSON Class.

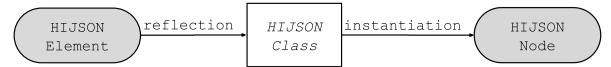


Figure 7: “HIJSON Element/Class/Node relationship”

Each HIJSON Element of the HIJSON document given as input, has a dynamic counterpart, a running instance called HIJSON Node, instantiated according to the corresponding HIJSON Class via reflection methods (see picture XXXXX).

To specify a new HIJSON Class means to extend the Toolkit to deal with a new class of HIJSON Element.

To extend the toolkit to deal with a new class of HIJSON Element is required to specify a new HIJSON Class, defining the following properties and methods:

- **in_graph**: a boolean value to express if the element is an approachable point in the graph paths;
- **in_2D_map**: a boolean value to express if the element is wanted in the 2D map;
- **get2DStyle**: a method that returns the 2D map appearance of the element, essentially HTML and CSS code;
- **get3DModel**: a method that returns the 3D model appearance of the element, a *THREE.js Object3D*;
- **getWidget**: a method that returns the information widget, a *React* component;
- **getProxy**: a method that returns server side proxy which encapsulates IoT sensor communication protocol, a *Node.js module*.

User’s needs for new indoor elements, different sensor equipment, alternative representation on 2D or 3D viewport are accepted by the definition of new HIJSON Classes that allows in this way single point custom extension of the Toolkit capabilities.



Figure 6: Graph paths generation: (a) detection of obstacles and computation of walkable area; (b) triangulation of walkable area; (c) identification of graph nodes area; (d) junction of nodes.

6. HJSON WEB FRAMEWORK

The HJSON Web Framework responds to the needs of an extendable, customizable, and scalable framework which provides at the same time IoT monitoring, realtime multi-person tracking and crossfloor user navigation.

Expandability and customizability derives from both design choices and HIJSON inherent characteristics, the possibility of semantic extensions. Scalability is directly borrowed from technologies used for the software development: *JavaScript* language, using *Node.js*, in particular *Express.js* as backend framework, exploiting the power of *WebSocket* protocol through the *Socket.io* library.

Being supported by the web as bearing platform, the framework exposes also an highly availability: it is so simple to use as to visit a website, both from desktop or mobile devices, without explicit requirements to install any software from proprietary stores (access to which is often denied from business devices).

The HIJSON Web Framework deeply relies on HIJSON Toolkit and offers the overall client/server architecture and a convinient, highly interactive user interface, leaving aside the specific indoor positioning system and the IoT sensors, to deal with a robust interface is provided and described in the following seciton.

6.1 Applications

The Framework has been designed focus on two different possible kind of users: the *Explorer* and the *Supervisor*. They have different requirements and are likely equipped with different devices: while the *Supervisor* monitors the indoor environment through a desktop workstation, the *Explorer* has a smartphone available and needs to be routed across the building.

6.1.1 IoT monitoring

Every element in the HIJSON environment is capable of showing information about itself, so it can be analyzed by the user. The modularity of the HIJSON Toolkit permits to show particular information or UI about a specific object, using polymorphic behaviours of the different HIJSON Nodes. If an object is connected to the network and it is capable of interaction, the user can benefit of its functions through the system (e.g. if the object is a thermostat, the user can see the temperature in the room and can turn on/off the heating). If the object isn't interactive, the system can show static information (e.g. for fire Extinguisher, the system shows the last date of checking).

6.1.2 Realtime multi-person tracking

A typical task performed by a *Supervisor* can be the monitoring of users locations inside the building. This operation can be required for various reasons, e.g. security or logistics. The devices that equips the *Explorers* can be used to track their position in realtime, giving the *Supervisors* the whole picture of the presences inside the building in every moment.

6.1.3 Crossfloor user navigation

As shown in the algorithmics section, the HIJSON Toolkit provides a particular strategy to assemble a graph of possible paths inside the building. This graph, represented also in the form of a weighted adjacency matrix, can be easily used to compute paths between two nodes inside the building. To achieve this result, the matrix, which edges are weighted according to the distance between two nodes, is used as input in an applicaiton of the Dijkstra's algorithm. The result is the shortest path between two selected nodes of the graph. Thanks to the crossfloor connections of nodes representing stairs or elevators, the paths calculated can also start and end on different stories.

6.2 Architecture

Like the vast majority of the web based application, the Framework exposes an overall architecture that is inherently *client/server*. In particular, two different type of possible client are identifiable: the *Supervisor* client and the *Explorer* client. Both of them connect to the same server.

The indoor space described by the HIJSON document provided as input is processed by the server (cfr. PROCESSING PIPELINE). After that any connecting *Explorer* client, presumably through a mobile device, will be provided with the information to perform crossfloor navigation of the building, while reporting user position to the server. The server will feed any connecting *Supervisor* client with users positions, along with data from sensor- equipped things present in the environment, realizing the IoT monitoring and the realtime multi-person tracking.

6.2.1 Server Architecture

The architecture of the server is depicted in XXXX. A web server module is responsible for listenning to connecting clients. Each client connection is handled by the web server module providing all the required resources and opening one websocket channel, through which will flow *Explorer* and/or *Supervisor* communication protocol data. In particular, **multi-person tracking** module receives position data from *Explorer* clients. It aggregates and sends these information to connected *Supervisor* clients through the web-

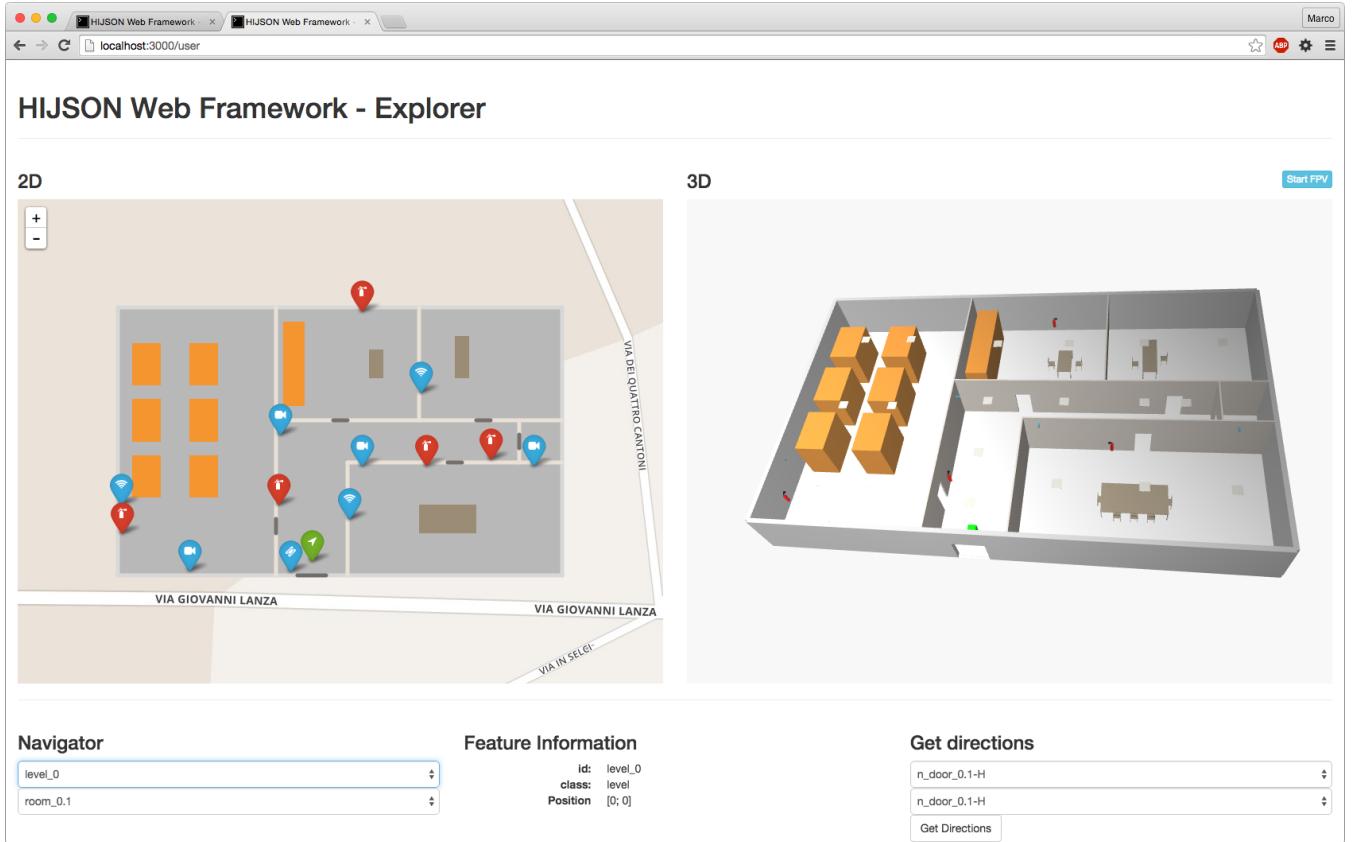


Figure 8: “HIJSON Web Framework UI”

socket channel, using a simple but reliable protocol later described. Independence from particular IoT sensor equipment communication protocol is achieved by the **smart things proxies** module through the proxies modules obtained by the HIJSON Class definition (`getProxy` method previously described).

6.2.2 Explorer client architecture

The *Explorer* client architecture is generally deployed on a mobile device, usually supplied to a user who needs to be routed across the environment described by HIJSON document. The **sensor adapter** module encapsulates the communication logic with the indoor positioning system. The presence of this module ensures independence from particular technology allowing client *Explorer* to rely on different indoor positioning systems: INDICARE ESEMPI SEN-SATI E CUTTING EDGE DI POSIZIONAMENTO IN-DOOR. INTRODURRE IL PROBLEMA DELLA COMU-NICAZIONE A LIVELLO API DEL BROWSER CON SEN-SORISTICA PER LA RILEVAZIONE DELLA POSIZIONE.

Every time the **sensor adapter** observes a perceptible modification in user position sends the new position information to the server through the single opened websocket, using the a message with the following syntax:

```
currentPosition = {
  coordinates: [x, y],
  levelId: level-ID
}
```

Relevant information includes, beside current coordinates, the indication of the story of the possibly multilevel building the user is in. The **smart things widgets** module being in common with the client *Supervisor*, has been treated in the next section.

6.2.3 Supervisor client architecture

The Client *Supervisor* architecture shows two modules. The first one, the **multi-person tracking** module, is responsible to receive through the websocket, from the server information about explorers of the environment, showing them in the user interface. The second module, the **smart things widget** communicates with the server to propose to the user realtime information about sensor-equipped objects in the environment. Data passes through the single websocket opened between the server and every *Supervisor* Client. Rely on a naive but effective communication protocol, each smart thing widget exchanges data only with respective smart thing proxy on the server. To ensure the data is sent only when the user requires the information relative to a specific smart thing, a widget lifecycle protocol is implemented: it is based on the 4 events `on_before_show`, `on_show`, `on_before_hide`, `on_hide` triggered, as suggested by their names when a widget is shown or hidden. When the user requires information about a smart thing, its widget has to be rendered, but `on_before_show` the server is notified to connect via relative proxy to the sensor. Once connected, the server begins to send data via websocket. Received data is shown through the wodget to the user. When done, or

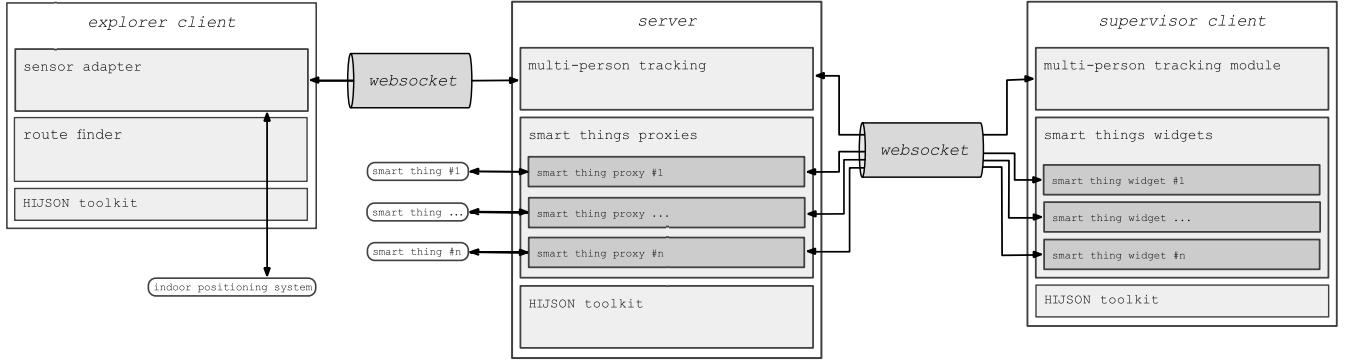


Figure 9: “HIJSON Web Toolkit architecture”

on_before_hide event of the widget, a notification is sent to the server announcing to stop sending data and the proxy close the connection to the sensor. Widget lifecycle protocol ensures that only requiring data is sent from the server to the client.

7. USE CASE

8. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper a novel format for indoor cartographical description has been introduced, named HIJSON. Utilization of local metric coordinate system, avoiding the manipulation of geographical coordinate really inconvenient when dealing with indoor spaces and objects, greatly simplify the drawing up process of the document. Process that can be further improved realizing a graphical editor to assist the user during the description of the indoor space. The implementation of such an editor is already programmed.

The HIJSON format focuses on a hierarchical representation of the indoor spaces that allows for completely capturing their topology. On the basis of this representation a virtual web environment can be rebuilt working as a unifying platform to run a bunch of different applications. The reference architecture of such a platform has been also implemented and described in this work. The architecture supports a range of applications: IoT monitoring, realtime-multiperson tracking and user crossfloor navigation are already implemented and described. A very convenient way to extend representation capabilities of smart objects is also mentioned as semantic extensions. These extensions (which affects both document format and web framework) may be easily collected in a public repository. Community can both use public available extensions or contribute by mapping new smart objects inside the HIJSON document.

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